

Minutes of the Farmland Conservation Easement Commission

**Jefferson County Courthouse, Room 112
320 S. Main St.
Jefferson, WI 53549**

Monday, June 11, 2012 12:30 pm

Members: Margaret Burlingham (Chairperson), Amy Rinard (Vice-Chairperson), Mariah Hadler (Secretary), Steve Nass and Blane Poulson.

1. Call to Order
The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Burlingham at 12:30 pm.
2. Roll Call
Commission members present included Burlingham, Poulson, Rinard, John Molinaro (ex-officio) and Hadler. Nass was absent. County staff present was Michelle Staff, Zoning Department.
3. Certification of Compliance With Open Meetings Law Requirements
Burlingham and Staff verified that the meeting was being held in compliance with open meetings law requirements.
4. Review of Agenda
No changes to the agenda.
5. Public Comment
Sue Marx asked the Farmland Conservation Easement Commission to forward a resolution to the Jefferson County Board in opposition to Site C for the proposed location of the County Highway Department because of the loss of farmland.

Hadler arrived at 12:35 pm.

6. Review & Approval of the May 14, 2012 minutes
Motion made by Hadler, seconded by Rinard to approve the May 14, 2012 minutes.
Motion carried on a voice vote with no objection.
7. Communications
Burlingham e-mailed the Commission the DATCP final draft of the PACE report which will be given to the Board of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection on June 14th, 2012. The report is due to the legislature by Saturday, June 30th, 2012. Burlingham stated that she will be writing a letter to support the Wisconsin PACE Evaluation Report and that the Farmland Conservation Easement Commission supports the changes that are recommended in the report.
8. NRCS/Federal update on Conservation Easements
Burlingham reported that the Farm Bill did pass the House and will be forwarded to the Senate. The bill extends the enhanced donated dedications for donation of conservation easements.
9. Discussion on Timothy Hunn donated easement.

Hunn is still working with Land and Water Conservation on a conservation plan. Burlingham asked that the item be removed until Hunn is ready to move forward.

10. Discussion and possible action on 2011 PACE applications

Dale Neupert, Jeffrey & Monica Gerner and Greg Wilke.

Burlingham stated that NRCS ranked the county's three applications and Gerner ranked number 1. NRCS will fund Neupert but NRCS may have to see if there is additional funding from other States to give to the Wilke easement. Burlingham referred the Commission to the cost estimates of the three easements. NRCS is working on cooperative agreements for the County to sign. Burlingham suggested the title work be completed as soon as possible in case there are problems they can be dealt with right away.

11. Revise the Commission's Overall Strategy/Work Plan for 2012 and 2013

The Commission will be going to the Dairy Breakfast in Watertown this weekend and will have brochures at the County Fair in July.

12. Discussion on easement applications and criteria

Commission discussed focusing on working with landowners that have contacted them. The Commission may want to send new brochures to targeted areas that are higher priority.

13. Discussion on possible new application period for farmland conservation easements.

The Commission discussed waiting to see how much funding is available after the current proposed easements are purchased.

14. Discussion on State of Wisconsin PACE Program

See item #7 in relationship to this item.

15. Future Meeting Dates

None of the members had conflicts with any of the upcoming dates.

16. Suggestions for the Next Agenda

No additional suggestions were made on agenda items.

17. Adjourn

Motion by Rinard, seconded by Hadler, to adjourn the meeting at 1:20 p.m. **Motion** carried on a voice vote with no objection.

Minutes by Michelle Staff, Zoning Technician, Jefferson County Planning and Zoning Department

Secretary Signature

Date